Maintenance of National Highway 55 in West Bengal

2479. SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware regarding the problems faced by National Highway No. 55 which connects Darjeeling Hills with the plans of Bengal, due to the lack of proper attention from the authorities in respect of maintenance, repairs, and developments; and

(b) if so, what steps Government contemplate to take for the solution of this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b) Development and Maintenance of National Highways is a continuous process. National Highways are maintained in traffic worthy condition within the available funds. National Highway No. 55 is occasionally affected by land slides during the rains. Immediate steps are taken to restore the traffic by carrying out necessary repairs. The overall allotment of funds for maintenance and repaires of all National Highways including NH 55 is to extent of 50—55% of the requirements only.

Commercial potentiality of unused land in various Ports

2480. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that large tracts of land belonging to various ports of the country are at present lying unused;

(b) if so, their area, port-wise;

(c) whether Government have estimated the commercial potentiality of these land if so details thereof;

(d) whether Government propose to issue necessary directions to the various port authorities of the country in this regard; and

(e) if so, when and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (c) The lands belonging to various Major Port Trusts are developed in phased manner keeping in view the growth of traffic and need for expansion of port facilities and related infrastructure. Depending upon the location, suitability and requirements of the port, pockets are identified by various Major Port Trusts from time to time for commercial exploitation. The Calcutta Port Trust has identified about 81 acres of land in the erstwhile Calcutta Jetty area on Strand Road and Boat Canal area for commercial development.

(d) and (e) The Government has issued a set of policy guidelines regarding the land management at Major Ports on 31-3-1982.

Construction of Express Highways in Maharashtra

2481. SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA:

DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) how many kilometres of Express Highways will be constructed in Maharashtra under the proposed new scheme of constructing such Express Highways;

(b) what are the broad areas from which these highways would go in Maharashtra; and

(c) by when this proposed scheme is likely to be launched?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (c) Presumably, the Hon'ble Members have it mind the taking up of Express ways under Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) scheme, through private sector participation. An Asian Development Bank assisted study was carried out in 1991-92, according to which about 10,000 km length has been suggested for construction in the country including the State of Maharashtra, in phases by the year 2015. The scheme is still in an embryonic stage.

Four-laning the Jallandhar-Amritsar Highway

2482. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the present position of on going work of four-laning of Jallandhar-Amritsar highway;

(b) by when it is scheduled for completion;

(c) whether Government are considering to make four-lane the Delhi-Amritsar highway; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGADISH TYTLER): (a) There is no proposal for widening to 4-lane of Jaliandhar—Amritsar Highway at this stage.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The 4-laning of Delhi-Jallandhar Section is in progress. Delhi-Murthal is already 4-lane. Four laning work between Murthal and Karnal is in progress and is likely to be completed by December, 1995. Four laning work between Karnal to Ambala and then to Sirhind has been approved and is targetted to be completed by June, 1998. The work of 4-laning between Sirhind and Jallandhar has been completed recently.

Improving National Highways Network

2483. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Highways network constitutes less than two per cent of total road network but carries nearly 40% of total road traffic;

(b) if so, what steps Government are contemplating to improve the National Highways network keeping in view the future traffic expansion; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to finance massive investment required for upgrading road condition in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir. The National Highways broadly constitute 2% of the total road network in the country but carry about 40% of the road traffic.

(b) Development of National Highways including widening/strengthening etc. is a continuous process and developmental works are taken up keeping in view the traffic intensity, *inter-se* priority of works, overall availability of funds etc.

(c) Certain projects have already been taken up by way of financing under overseas loan assistance programme in various States in the high density traffic corridors. In addition, Private Sector participation in the Highway Sector on BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) basis is being contemplated.

Development of Tuticorin Port

2484. SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to develop the Tuticorin Port which was declared as a Major Port two decades ago;

(b) whether following facilities are presently available at the Tuticorin Port:

(i) Terminal capacity for transhipment of containers, and facility to handle bigger fourth generation container vessels,

(ii) Enough depth (in the approach channel) to enable vessels having more than 27 feet draught to enter the port and whether feasibility report has been submitted in this regard;

(iii) Night navigation facilities,

(c) whether the Tuticorin Port is to be declared as a Free Port; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (i) No exclusive Container Berths are available at Tuticorin Port. Container Vessels are handled at the existing General Cargo Berths. Transhipment Containers are handled with the help of top-lift trucks. For stacking Containers, back up area adjoining to berths and open yard are available. There are no facilities to handle bigger fourth generation Container Vessels.

(ii) No, Sir. A feasibility report for deepening of the channel and the basin has been received from the port, but no investment decision has been taken.

(iii) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

DTC Bus Services between Nauroji Nagar to Central Terminal

2485. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of DTC buses plying between Nauroji Nagar to Central Secretariat via B-Avenue, New Delhi, Number-wise and time-table-wise details;

(b) whether it is a fact that very limited number of buses are plying between the said route and Government had withdrawn the bus route No. 570;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the above bus is running very irregularly;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government have any proposal to introduce more bus services in the said route; and

(f) if so, by when, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Route No. 570 (Peak Time Service) is operating from Nauroji Nagar to Central Secretariat via B-Avenue. Three trips at 0836 hrs., 0924 hrs. and 0948 hrs. are operated from Nauroji Nagar to Central Secretariat and three trips at 1736 hrs. from Central Secretariat